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ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING



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THE POETS' ENCHIRIDION
ADDRESS TO UVEDALE PRICE
AN INVOCATION TO SLEEP
CATARINA TO CAMOENS

✓ THE
POETS' ENCHIRIDION

A HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED POEM

WITH AN INEDITED
✓ ADDRESS TO UVEDALE PRICE
ON HIS EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY

AN EARLY
✓ INVOCATION TO SLEEP

AND A PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF
THE RENOWNED POEM
✓ CATARINA TO CAMOENS

BY
ELIZABETH BARRETT BARRETT
(AFTERWARDS MRS. BROWNING) ✓

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PRINTED EXCLUSIVELY FOR MEMBERS OF
THE BIBLIOPHILE SOCIETY
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NOTE

THESE characteristic and remarkably interesting poems are presented in this manner to afford the members of The Bibliophile Society a foretaste of the unusual literary treat that awaits them in the two larger volumes of unpublished Browning MSS. now in course of preparation.

The distinguished English editor, who will have full editorial charge of the work, writes: —

“ ‘The Poets’ Enchiridion’ is the author’s own title. The Uvedale Price Address is connected with the genesis of the ‘Enchiridion.’ The sweet little ‘Invocation’ was written in or before her early teens; and the ‘Catarina to Camoens’ is a lovely sketch of the poet’s mature period. When these pieces are absorbed into the larger work (volume II) there will be some very interesting things to tell about them.

“As to the poet’s ‘Autobiography,’ I hope you will be able to possess your soul in patience just a little longer.”

Meantime it will suffice to state that the MSS. were obtained when the executors of the poet’s

son decided to disperse them publicly. They are samples of a large number — of about one hundred and fifty unpublished pieces — purchased by Mr. Henry H. Harper, and placed at the disposal of the Society to print for the members. It is one of the most important literary “finds” of modern times.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING:
NEW DATA

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NEW DATA

A CENTENNIAL ADDRESS TO THE BIBLIOPHILE
SOCIETY SPOKEN ACROSS THE ATLANTIC BY

H. BUXTON FORMAN

JUST a century ago a tiny, frail maiden of eight years, living with her parents and younger brothers and sisters in a beautiful and luxurious home at Hope End in the county of Hereford, came to the serious conviction that she was a poet. Her father and mother, far from discountenancing such a belief in their eldest-born, rather fostered it in the little Elizabeth, Beth, or Ba, as she is variously styled in the archives of her now illustrious life. From early infancy Elizabeth Barrett Moulton Barrett, to give her for once her full baptismal name, had been accustomed to shape her budding thoughts in verse and in due course to set them down on paper. In her sixth year, on beholding some carefully indited lines of hers on Virtue, her father addressed to her a letter containing a ten shilling note, and placed on it the playful superscription, "To the Poet Laureate of Hope End;"

and when, at the age of eight, in the year 1814, little Ba commandeered a quarto volume of blank paper, to be the receptacle of transcripts of her various compositions, there was no case for surprise or discouragement of any sort.

Whether the transcripts were to be made from time to time by the little authoress herself or by her fond but by no means injudicious mother, busied with the duties of maternity (for she bore her husband eleven children beside Ba) is a question not yet positively settled; nor is it a very important one. It is certain that at a very early age the child wrote a *surprisingly* mature ladylike hand, which altered from time to time; and if she was the transcriber of 1814, of whose verse and prose the copy-book was destined to contain so considerable a mass, her hand must have degenerated in tidiness as it developed in character. That is by no means unlikely; for, as Browning records in the 1887 edition of her works, she was practically self-educated, although both a Governess and a Tutor took part in her tuition at Hope End.

What is certain is that this quarto commencement of recorded authorship began with a carefully penned heading in ornamental characters which look more like the best work of an infant prodigy than the not very strong delineation of a matron. The heading is formed of minutely shaded letters and reads thus —

POEMS

by

ELIZABETH B. BARRETT

The body of the writing shows a somewhat similar conception of the calligraphic art to that shown by writing of a slightly later date unquestionably hers; and, while it looks at least as mature in some respects, perhaps more mature, has, *per contra*, one or two rather childish characteristics in it: hence it remains to settle by extraneous minute investigation whose hand it positively is. But one thing is beyond all possible question, that the compositions are those of Elizabeth herself, whether she or her mother wrote these copies out fairly from the child's own written copies — as for instance those bestowed on the various members of the family at Hope End for whom they were composed. That quarto collection of transcripts was in fact a sort of limited act of publication; and it is at the first centenary of that act that we have now arrived, — sixty-eight years after the marriage of the still frail little lady, but by then recognized great poet, to Robert Browning, and fifty-three years after her death and burial at Florence.

The Bibliophile Society with its sumptuous issues of fine contributions to English literature is a characteristic growth of that vast prosperity and

strong intellectual and political progress which the democratic child of Hope End and the great woman who wrote "Aurora Leigh" and "Casa Guidi Windows" was as forward to recognize and appreciate as the great nation akin to her own was to receive into its bosom the children of her spirit; and it is a fitting revenge of time that the Society located west of the Atlantic is to give these early works and others of still greater interest to the light of day.

It is not to be credited that either she or her husband had any dread of the daylight for any records they might leave behind them. They had ample opportunity for putting out of existence any of the vast accumulations of drafts and records and unpublished works and letters to them and from them; and there is evidence of Browning having gone out of his way to gather in much of this material after his wife's death, and gone over it in some measure before he too passed to his place, in Westminster Abbey, and left his son as custodian of the archives. That son dying in his turn and somewhat before his time, his executors have seen fit to scatter over the face of the earth this enormous aggregation of documents; and The Bibliophile Society has not been backward in the endeavour to secure what it could for issue among its members.

It is an old tradition of the United States of

America to be more "up to date" than England in respect of the poetry and personality of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Indeed long before she had consented to take that last august name, and was about to allow her own full maiden-name to appear for the first time on the title-page of an important collection of poems, it was at New York that that collection secured priority of appearance. It is useless to attempt to persuade The Bibliophile Society that the two volumes called "A Drama of Exile and other Poems" (New York, 1845) did not appear before the two volumes called simply "Poems" (London, 1844); for the American book, identical in substance with the English book, only differs from it in typography, in a matter of trade custom, and in the Preface. The body of the London Preface is practically identical with that of New York, varying only in a few phrases. But there is a preliminary paragraph in the New York Preface almost unknown even to bibliographers on either side of the Atlantic, which leaves no doubt whatever on the question of priority. The paragraph should be grateful to the hearts of Americans at this day when the world acclaims Mrs. Browning as the greatest of women-poets, — some say except Sappho; but who can really, with the scanty knowledge we have of her, truly fix Sappho's place? At any rate let this glorious Englishwoman's utterance stand on record

in one of The Bibliophile Society's issues in this centennial Year of Grace: —

“My love and admiration have belonged to the great American people, as long as I have felt proud of being an Englishwoman, and almost as long as I have loved poetry itself. But it is only of late that I have been admitted to the privilege of personal gratitude to Americans, and only to-day that I am encouraged to offer to their hands an American edition of a new collection of my poems, about to be published in my own country. This edition precedes the English one by a step, — a step eagerly taken, and with a spring in it of pleasure and pride suspended, however, for a moment, that, by a cordial figure I may kiss the soil of America, and address my thanks to those sons of the soil, who, if strangers and foreigners, are yet kinsmen and friends, and who, if never seen, nor perhaps to be seen by eyes of mine, have already caused them to glisten by words of kindness and courtesy.”

Again, when Elizabeth Barrett Barrett had been led to the Altar by Robert Browning, and husband and wife each published in 1850 a collection of Poems in two volumes, the States really took more seriously than the mother country did the

poetess's own denunciation of her early version of the Prometheus Bound of Æschylus, and her propitiatory offering of an entirely new and vigorous translation. The States naturally absorbed more eagerly than England did the fervid and noble democracy and humanitarianism of "Casa Guidi Windows," and the advanced politics of "Poems before Congress," published as separate volumes in 1851 and 1860. Accordingly we find New York producing in the earlier of those two years a separate volume entitled "Prometheus Bound and other Poems; including Sonnets from the Portuguese, Casa Guidi Windows, &c.," and naming the 1860 booklet after its first poem, — "Napoleon III in Italy." As to "Aurora Leigh" and the "Sonnets from the Portuguese," it is next to impossible to gauge the vivid, the deep, the instantaneous impression created in the various regions of the English-speaking world by the radiant universality of that spacious narrative poem and the exquisite and unique tenderness and perfection of those Sonnets, which were, *sub rosa*, her own love-sonnets to Browning. But when the beautiful spirit which created by years of residence a sacred atmosphere in and about Casa Guidi had taken up her freedom from suffering, and lay at rest in the English Burial Ground at Florence, the States surpassed in mournful regrets even the respectful sorrow of Mrs. Browning's

own country. Here again, bibliography is a truly typical hand-maid to literary appreciation; for it is to be observed that while the "Last Poems" of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, gathered up and edited by her husband, were published in England in 1862 with a few lines written by him, the American edition issued simultaneously with the English, contained a different few lines in which Browning set forth that the right of publishing the book in the United States had been "liberally purchased by Mr. James Miller," and that it was hoped there would be "no interference with the same." Miller's book was one of the "blue and gold" pocket volumes so popular in the third quarter of last century. Like the English book it was called simply "Last Poems by Elizabeth Barrett Browning;" but it was graced with a "Memorial" by Theodore Tilton, not only sympathetic and charming as an essay, but, being quasi-biographical, earlier by a quarter of a century or more than any attempt in England to publish a Life of Mrs. Browning. On the other hand it is to be recorded with regret that Miller omitted Browning's beautiful and simple words of dedication to the fair city that had given hospitable and loving shelter to him and his wife for many years and appreciated their work for Italy:—

TO "GRATEFUL FLORENCE,"
TO THE MUNICIPALITY, HER REPRESENTATIVE,
AND TO TOMMASEO, ITS SPOKESMAN,
MOST GRATEFULLY.

Browning's long survival of his wife could not but restrain English endeavour to celebrate her in biographical memoirs. To the end of his life he remained passionately in love with her and too reverently so as to let the world be at once flooded with authoritative documents; but that the masses of such documents controlled by him were scrupulously guarded from perishing is certain; and he doubtless contemplated with equanimity the eventual upheaval that would make public just as much about his wife's wonderful and flawless life, his own relations with her, and all else concerning the Brownings, as the world might find a use for. While these sacred archives were in the hands of the only son of the two poets, he by no means denied access to them; and it was perhaps by reason of uncontrollable circumstances that his executors were left to deal with the formidable collection distributed under the hammer in the summer of 1913. It consisted of vastly more than Sir Frederick Kenyon drew upon for his invaluable selection from Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Letters published in two thick volumes in 1897; nor was the material of high interest by any means ex-

hausted when he followed those volumes up in 1899 with two more consisting of the letters exchanged between the affianced poets during the year preceding their marriage.

The Bibliophile Society will doubtless learn with eager anticipation that those youthful efforts in the quarto copy-book with others obtained by the Society afford a veritable constructive chronicle of the child-poet's early life at Hope End and elsewhere. There are about ninety of these compositions, the acquisition of which was the more fortunate from the circumstance, lamented by Sir F. Kenyon in his edition of Mrs. Browning's Letters, that there is little known of those early years beyond what in 1843 the poetess imparted to R. H. Horne in a biographical letter which he ultimately published. The great majority of the compositions is in verse; but a good deal of prose is scattered among the poems; and it is from the poems that we learn most about the Hope End life and circle.

Fortunate as that acquisition was, it is surpassed in actual importance by the recovery of a most remarkable record of the life of Elizabeth Barrett written by herself on her entry into her fifteenth year. That record Browning certainly knew, for it was found wrapped in paper and marked by him with the words "Her own life and character to her 15th Year." The fourteen-year-old girl's

“Glimpses into My Own Life and Literary Character” will figure, importantly, in the first volume of her posthumous writings which, as I understand, the Council hopes to issue this year. How well the “Glimpses” and the poems of the copy-book fit in with each other may well be shown by a few examples. From the “Glimpses” we learn that the title of “Poet Laureate of Hope End” was awarded to her “in her sixth year,” and that, *at six*, having “mounted Pegasus at four,” she thought herself “privileged to show off feats of horsemanship.” Here, then, from the copy-book, are the diploma lines leading up to that privilege:—

Oh! thou! whom Fortune led to stray
In all the gloom of Vice’s way,
Return poor Man! to Virtue’s path,
The sweetest sweet, on this round Earth;
Thou slumber of the peaceful mind.
Be loving, grateful, good, and kind;
Oh! beauteous Virtue, prythee smile,
For you the heaviest hours beguile.

At eight, when she was being dazzled in her nursery, at a first acquaintance, by Beattie’s “Minstrel,” she addressed a little note to her father in mingled verse and prose, thus —

Sweet Parent! dear to me as kind
Who sowed the very bottom of my mind

And raised the very inmost of my heart
To taste the sweets of Nature you impart!

I hope you will let us drink tea with you and have
your fiddle to-night —

YOUR DEAR CHILD ELIZABETH

An answer to the Nursery.

Here Pegasus is harnessed to carry a petition; and the verses cannot be called quite disinterested; but what a strangely powerful view for a child to take of heredity and training!

Not till she was nine do we find her (in her record) taking keen pleasure in weaving the raiment of verse for the children of her imagination; and only two months before her ninth birthday the copy-book yields evidence of this enthusiasm, — in some lines to Summer and some headed “Aurora.”

SUMMER

All hail most grateful Summer, Goddess hail!
Throw back thy yellow hair — throw back thy Veil,
Which Spring has thrown so lightly o’er thy face;
Goddess approach — let’s see majestic grace. —
Come near, come tip with gold the varied trees,
Come wake the World, come wake the gentle breeze
To joy, to lively Mirth, to tender love;
The peacock with its tints, the am’rous dove.

Sometimes by light'ning is the thunder driven,
To shake the dark celestial Vault of Heaven.

AURORA

But hark! Aurora wakes the Cock's shrill crow
And cooling zephyrs gently blow,
The lark with quiv'ring wings begins its flight,
The peacock with its varied feathers dight,
The playful Fawns around them play
Whilst linnets hail the fair approach of day . . .

The next Summer was welcomed beforehand
with an improved quality in the singing note.

TO SUMMER

Fair Summer come — thy breath with perfumes
sweet

Scatters the rising odors at our feet,
Light zephyrs frolic o'er the full drest ground,
Save the sweet linnet, there is heard no sound,
The silent cattle graze on yonder hill,
Or oftentimes they lave within the warbling rill;
The startling hare, now led by hope or fear,
Dreams that the speckled hounds are watching
near,

And the lambkins with joy, now frolic and play
And the fawn quickly flies, in the sun's bright ray,
Then haste thee, sweet summer, I long for thee,
For thy jocund pleasures, to all are free.

This is not the occasion for weighing the value of her evidence on whatever topic she touches; but when all the new material is brought forward it will be clear that her memory was much more accurate than has been supposed, and that she does not make a lax use of definite terms, as has been sometimes supposed. Browning's few words (in the 1887 notes) concerning his wife's father were probably based on information got from her. Alluding to a silly description of Mr. Barrett as a gentleman of "semi-tropical taste," the poet records that he came from Jamaica, and that "after purchasing the estate in Herefordshire, he gave himself up assiduously to the usual duties and occupations of a country gentleman, — farmed largely, was an active magistrate, became for a year High Sheriff, . . . and busied himself as a Liberal. He had a fine taste for landscape gardening, planted considerably, loved trees . . . and for their sake discontinued keeping deer in the park." That this Virgilian preference of the trees to the deer probably asserted itself actively after 1815 may be judged from the presence of the fawns in the pretty little scene of the "Aurora" lines and again in the second "Summer," for it was the spacious domain of Hope End that was the background of all its little Laureate's nature poetry. The landscape gardening, farming, and so on, are duly recorded by a poem in the "copy-book" series

addressed to Mr. Barrett. The continuous transcript of compositions of little Ba aged eight and nine ends with two tender heroic quatrains to the mother to whom she owed so much and of whom so little has up to now been known. There was a lull in the child's poetic productiveness after this point in the Spring of 1815; but that similar transcripts of subsequent poems were added on paper of identical manufacture water-marked "1814" is certain, although we do not know positively their extent — the book to which all alike in all probability belonged, having lost its cover and come to pieces. Among these there are an address to her father on his birthday, in which she takes occasion to congratulate him on extensive improvements at Hope End, and another set of quatrains about some magnificent clock newly erected there. Here follows the poem —

ON PAPA'S BIRTHDAY: MAY 28TH, 1815

Hail dear Papa! I hail thy natal day —
The Muses speak my hidden thoughts of love;
That love is more than e'en the Muse can say —
That love shall reign, until we rise above.

Sweet Philomel enchants the listening grove[s]
While Music's warblings twitter in her throat —
By murmuring streams, mute silence roves,
Echo scarce dares repeat the Heavenly note.

'Tis thus these hills declare their bounteous Sire
As on thy birth, to thee, His gifts they pay,
Sweet Philomella leads the tuneful choir
And all is joy to see this happy day.

On thy fair birth the meadows smile
How brightly on this day the prospects rise!
May they all painful care beguile
And humble Sorrow as it flies!

The smile of hope illumines thy soul
Amid these Vales, where Philomel doth sing,
Where beauty reigns without control
Throughout His Works, God's praises ring!

These polished walls, raised by your tasteful hand,
These smiling shrubs, these tangled walks and hills,
These rising rocks, hewn by your active band,
And drooping flow'rets washed by murmuring rills:

These waters by your hand are taught to glide,
And wild ducks strain their soaring wing —
Far on the limpid wave they ride
While sweets the gathering zephyrs fling:

An useful farm now owns thy generous sway
And oxen fatten fast at thy command —
A pleasure comes with each untasted day
Thou reap'st the fruit, and nurstles all thy land.

Long may'st thou live, as on this happy day
Amidst thy smiling little Family
And may we, grateful, e'er thy cares repay
And play about, the shilling gallery! *

And here is the other piece, of the same month, in
which the subject of changes at Hope End is
further enlarged upon.

ON THE CLOCK PUT UP AT HOPE END—
MAY, 1815

Hark what deep tone proceeds from yonder
Tower,
For tell-tale Echo's voice betrays the sound;
A Clock — the Minstrel of the passing hour,
While breathing Zephyrs gently sport around. —

New is the note amidst these varied shades,
Sweet Nature's Songsters startle at the tone.
Cynthia appears and day's gay habit fades,
But still the Clock maintains its drowsy moan. —

Oh! may its Warning never cease to bring
An useful lesson to our listening ear,
Whilst hoary Time is swiftly on the wing
To teach the value of each passing year. —

* Probably the children's garden, in their own parlance.

To him who raised in Albion's rugged clime,
Constantinople's Minarets and dome
May rich rewards borne on the Wings of Time
For ever chain him to his lovely home! —

The well-known conversion of the commonplace modern residence at Hope End into a house somewhat in the taste of the historic Pavilion at Brighton is what the local Poet Laureate celebrates in the quatrains about the clock; and the two poems, showing careful study of Gray's poetry, especially the "Elegy," are *pièces justificatives*, if such were needed, for the statement that a little later, "at ten," her "poetry was entirely formed by the style of written authors."

At eleven, according to the "Glimpses," she "wished to be considered an authoress;" and so earnestly did she go to work on the necessary reading and self-training, so closely did she profit by Mr. McSwiney's classical help, that before she was fourteen she was dedicating to her father an epic poem in four books with an elaborate Preface printed by his orders because, as she told Horne, Mr. Barrett was bent on spoiling her!

At twelve, says the young lady of the "Glimpses," she "enjoyed a literary life with all its pleasures;" and among those were the joys of studying the language, History, and Poetry of Greece, with a special view to authorship, of writing and revising

the four books of "The Battle of Marathon" and the Preface thereto, and, perhaps, of seeing some of the work through the press. But there is nothing like getting contemporary confirmation from the outside; and here are some passages from a letter which she wrote to her beloved Uncle Sam, at the very period, — in November, 1818:

" . . . : I have read 'Douglas on the Modern Greeks.' I think it a most amusing book. . . . I have not yet finished 'Bigland on the Character and Circumstances of Nations.' An admirable work indeed. . . . I do not admire 'Mme. de Sevigne's letters,' though the French is excellent — the idioms beautiful — yet the sentiment is not novel, and the rhapsody of the style is so affected, so disgusting, so entirely FRENCH, that every time I open the book it is rather as a task than a pleasure — the last Canto of 'Childe Harold' (certainly much superior to the others) has delighted me more than I can express. The description of the waterfall is the most exquisite piece of poetry that I ever read, —

THE HELL OF WATERS WHERE THEY HOWL AND HISS
AND BOIL IN ENDLESS TORTURE —

'tis really fine, really POETRY. All the energy, all the sublimity of modern verse is centered in these lines — they are models which would not dishonour any man to imitate."

As a child, a girl in her teens, a young woman from 20 to 30 years old, and finally as a poet renowned wherever her tongue is spoken, she was a most remarkable correspondent — indeed a master of the whole art and craft of letter-writing, and that when she was little more than a child,—as The Bibliophile Society's own documents could readily demonstrate to the members.

Towards the close of the "Glimpses" her brother Edward's departure from the dear companionship of his sister for the Charter House school in London is touchingly dwelt upon; and it was probably soon after that that she wrote one of the most delightful and masterly of her letters to her father. It may fitly adorn this address.—

MY EVER EVER DEAREST PUPPY,

Sam's letter to Mama received yesterday was certainly the bearer of a severe disappointment to me as it contained the tidings of your being yet UNCERTAIN whether to allow me the long anticipated happiness of beholding my beloved Bro, Granny, Trip, yourself and sweet Storm or to withhold the delightful boon! — When I showed you Sam's letters in which he declared an intention of bringing down his own carriage in order to return with *me*, you did not object, and I fondly believed that a kind consent was implied by your silence! I am undeceived, and am I actuated by presump-

tion when I thus come forward to throw myself on your mercy? I believe I am not, for whilst I supplicate a smile I will submit to a disappointing frown without a murmur, tho' not perhaps without a pang!—So thoroughly am I convinced of my ever dearest Papa's affection for me, and so perfectly am I aware of the superiority of his judgment that I would not complain tho' the awful fiat were to pass his lips, and yet while my fate is not decided I may HOPE, and I may solicit [*sic*] a merciful sentence! —

You may perhaps exclaim with Apollo, “Magna petis BA” — but you cannot add “Non est mortalis quod optas” — Consider my sweet Puppy that by ONE smile accompanied by that politest of all little words “Yes,” you may make me more happy, more gratified than all the pomp of Ciceronian eloquence can express! — Oh! do not, pray do not, refuse! at least do not be angry with me for pressing on you a boon which had been so long, so joyfully anticipated! —

Your grand objection is on account of my singing! — ! I promise you most faithfully and on my HONOR, that if you allow those features to relax into a becoming smile I will practise carefully every day in London my “do re fa” which if I do, Mrs. Orme thinks will even IMPROVE my voice! I also promise most faithfully that on my return home I will turn all my energies towards

understanding, and excelling in, both vocal and practical music!

When I promise my sweet Puppy I do not consider myself SLIGHTLY BOUND but under a sacred obligation to fulfil it! —

Thus have I offered every thing in my power in order to obtain that fascinating solitary word “YES”! I have bid as high as my purse will admit! Oh let the kind, the affectionate Auctioneer exclaim “Going . . going . . gone!”

My heart whispers that you will not refuse, that you will not turn from me in anger! — My dearest, dearest Puppy grant my request! ONE week in London!—Let me not be ac[c]used of presumption in thus entreating so urgently for a petition to which perhaps you annex no importance! — But to me my beloved Puppy it seems worthy to make “*worlds* CONTEND.” — Imagine yourself my age once more, how your heart would beat with joy at the prospect of an excursion to the metropolis!—Have I tormented you? If I have, oh! forgive me, and let the kind verdict be “Guilty but to be recom[m]ended to mercy” —

Your always affectionate
and fondly attached Child
BA —

“The Poets’ Enchiridion,” an “Address to Uvedale Price on his eightieth Birthday,” a very young

but not infantine "Invocation before Sleeping," and a fascinating early draft of the renowned poem "Catarina to Camoens" afford samples of poetry in different kinds. Work galore in all these classes the Council has in store for the members. There are, moreover, unpublished poems of the Sidmouth period, one of which relates with terrible vividness a grotesque dream of 1833 and consists of thirty-one quatrains. Another of these, written in 1837, is somewhat allied to the well-known "My Doves," but takes the playful form of a Letter from one of those birds to a certain Canary, and will keep its readers entertained through some three hundred lines. Another is a beautiful set of verses (twelve quatrains) to the Rev. G. B. Hunter, the father of Mary Hunter ("the Little Friend"), and points the moral of the fact that, although he had considerable influence on the poet's mind when she was at Sidmouth, his name does not appear in her printed books, — in a specially bound copy of which, the poem was written before they were sent to him from London in 1844. Then there is new material connected with, and till now disconnected from, the projected classic drama of "Psyche Apocalypté," in an account of which Horne published one of the schemes of his illustrious coadjutor in that project. A prose criticism of October, 1826, written at the request of the veteran Uvedale Price on examining the proof sheets of a book he was

about to issue, is of considerable interest, in view of the relative ages of author and critic, and the great respect and regard the young lady, within a few months of her majority, had for the notable old gentleman then shortly to be created a baronet for his services to the cause of Liberalism. Then there is a considerable mass saved from a long and very ambitious poem in heroic couplets, in some respects better than those of "An Essay on Mind," but evidently less to the taste of her father, whose somewhat capricious discouragement of his daughter on that occasion gave her pain and grief, and almost caused her to destroy a large amount of her manuscript. Parts of this ultimately became "The Poets' Enchiridion;" and for the consolidation of that beautiful poem we are probably indebted to the sympathetic literary relations established with Uvedale Price in the nick of time. Of the remains of the larger work The Bibliophile Society has secured six or seven hundred lines.

A general look-round has also resulted in the recovery of a good deal both in verse and in prose contributed to periodical literature and well worthy of preservation, though thus far ignored by Editors.

Of the manuscripts one section not yet mentioned is peculiarly interesting. This consists of translations from Greek, Latin, and Italian authors, — to-wit, Bion, Horace, Claudian, Dante; and though

some of these belong to the end of the period covered by the "Glimpses," none of them are truly immature. To Dante, she reverted in the latter part of her career — about the time of "Casa Guidi Windows," and made at least two manuscripts of the First Canto of the Hell, — what seems to be the final manuscript being carefully revised, and altered here and there. It was probably the experience of the difficulty of putting Dante's work religiously into Dante's metre (*terza rima*) that decided her not to shackle her freedom with so intricate a measure when she composed that glorious poem "Casa Guidi Windows," which, though written strictly in groups of triple alternate rhymes is not in *terza rima*, — *pace* the shade of Swinburne, who when in the flesh described as in that metre the noblest of English poems on Italian liberty, except — if except — some of those which make up his own magnificent collection "Songs before Sunrise." It is in that collection, in "The Halt before Rome," that he pays his touching tribute to the

"sweet great song that we heard
Poured upon Tuscany,"

and in noting an error in her estimate of a King's oath (confessed in her own Preface), gives us the

exquisitely appropriate words with which to end
an address about her —

“Sea-eagle of English feather,
A song-bird beautiful-souled!”

THE POETS' ENCHIRIDION
ADDRESS TO UVEDALE PRICE
AN INVOCATION TO SLEEP
CATARINA TO CAMOENS

THE POETS' ENCHIRIDION

My song! mine ancient song! which was to me
A pleasant hope, is now a memory,
For memory is the ashes of our hope.
My silent song! no longer doth it cope
With my free heart, what time veiled solitude
Did sit before me in a holy mood
With brow of worship, preaching silently
About the mighty things of earth and sky.
Lo! as St. Dunstan's harp, hung on the wall,
Ceased not ev'n then its labour musical
But went on with the same familiar lay
Its master's touch had lessened it to play —
So is my harp . . . my soul: her theme is gone
Which was her master, but its spell and tone
And human sympathies and dreams of power
Cleave to her diapason at this hour!
So deem I a new song may now be taught:
It shall be as a voice unto my thought
Which else were silent: as, against their wills,
The little valley prisons many rills
In her green bondage, so my narrow song
Shall turn into one course the gushings strong

Of mind and feeling, that they aye may flow,
(Brightening the pebbles which therein I throw)
To mirror Heaven above and freshen earth below!

Oh ye! who in your lonely wanderings
Tune up your spirit's harp with golden strings
Because the meadows are alive with flowers,
At gossip with the bees in summer hours;
Because the spring layeth her votive wreath
Upon the mountains what time underneath
The tir'd Ocean turneth unto sleep
Breathing and muttering midst his slumbers deep!
Lay not your harp where rust will fret its strings,
Dream not your pleasant dreams of passing things,
Of the green leaves which drop off one by one —
The honeyed bees which perish with the sun —
The summer breath which bloweth and is done:
The colored flowers which have no color long —
The quaint bird which is silenced in his song —
The cloudless welkin which the clouds must
cover —
And the dumb ocean where the winds sweep over!

Have *I* not walked abroad in our fair world
When every little leaf was fresh unfurled
To fan the blossoms? Have mine eyes not seen,
(As we may see thro' tears) the broad sunsheen
Turning like Midas all it touched to gold:
Have *I* not viewed the Ocean's scroll unrolled

Whereon is written *Time*, — and the woods round
Shewing their leafy glories with a sound?

Yea! I have seen these things! — but aye I
thought

That all this pride was out of ruin wrought!
Behold! the blossoms which today are ours
Spring from the dust of last year's buried flowers!
The grass which seems to cloak our hills in Mirth
Is but the green shroud of an ancient earth
Once very green, now dead: — the royal sun
Shining so blythe on us hath also shone
On some who unto darkness bent their way! —
Ay me! Ay me! thus when I fain would stay
Within this house of Beauty, her lamp lit
Shews me how Change upon her hearth doth sit
An unforbidden guest. Thus when I stand
I' the sorrow of man's strength, on this fair land,
My lips ask 'What is life' with faltering breath
And all things sensible do answer — *Death!*
Therefore I turn from Nature's pleasant dit
Unto the ear that listeth oft to it
For whose use it was fashioned — straight I go
From the majestical and air-hung show
Of woods and booming waters, mountain, dale,
The which are God's creations, tho' made frail,
Unto the breath of God, the deathless soul,
Who master albeit prisoner of the whole
Vieweth the grossness of the things that be
And by the touch of cunningest alchemy

Maketh their uses spiritual — I find
Much here for wonder, and I fain would bind
This theme immortal to my mortal song,
This frontlet to my brows, and trace the strong
Desire of some strong soul to cast away
Th' Ægyptian bonds, the manacles of clay,
And follow o'er the deep truth's pillared flame,
The which desire, when passionate, men name
By the proud name of Genius, and I would
Refer it to discernment of the good —
The good or beautiful — by ancient rule,
Beauty is good and good is beautiful.

TO UVEDALE PRICE, ESQ^r.

On his birthday, March 26, 1827

My words are on my lips uncalled: I turn
Towards thee, unpermitted — nor inurn
Within the lonely darkness of mine heart,
Such feelings as can never thence depart,
And do *inherit* sound. It is not fit,
That *I*, who have rejoiced o'er pages writ
By thy soul's lamp, should joy not it was lit:
I, who with pilgrim feet did erewhile press
Thy distant paths of leafy secretness, —
Where Nature welcomes man in Nature's gear, —
Freed from the tyrant's chain, and bonds slave's
fear —

Freed by thy generous hand, from which was ta'en
The zone of painting, to replace the chain!
Thence grateful, to thy will her actions timing,
She charms thine hills, and green-grass vales, —
subliming

Thy solemn forests' wild divinities —
Yews, the black mourners for gone centuries,
Veiling the place in shadow — horrent oaks,
Braving the Harpy Winds and thunderstrokes
And blue canicular sulphur — Larches fierce,
Writhing and grappling with the Earth to pierce

Her royal sides by roots thrust out aslant! —
 And keeping aye with Heaven proud covenant! —
 Whereby old Solitude, engendered dumb,
 Speaks to the soul by gesture: and doth come,
 She, of the veiled brow, who wont to stay
 I' the Poet's soul — as his Egeria —
 Th' IDEAL, won by love or forced by spell
 To walk such place in glory visible! —
 Yea! and thy spell is vocal to mine ear —*
 And Homer leaves his mouldering sepulchre
 For a new Nestor! Classic Poetry,
 Who hath been forced by cruel Time to be
 A Philomela, marred of her sweet speech —
 Who hath been therewithal enforced to teach,
 With finger gestes, and cunning broideries
 And gorgeous painted forms, only our *eyes*,
 And not, as erst, our HEARING, with her strain —
 Doth look up at thy voice, and speak again!
 Yea! thus the shadow of thy time, thine age,
 Like to the statue's shade i' the antique page †
 Seems only shed upon the earth to show
 The beamy treasure which was hid below!

For me — for me — shall Memory's pleasant flood
 Keep green within my heart a gratitude!
 Because when, erewhile, by mine Harp I sat,
 And faintly gave to sound what thought begat —

* Mr. Price's Work on Accent. [The author was not
 created a Baronet till 1828.]

† *Gesta Romanorum*

When uncommunicable fears, that sting
And hide beneath their wings the festering, —
Darkened about my spirit — the deep fear
Lest *none* should hear the tone . . . or *some*
SHOULD hear —

When the tone faltering grew, — the lamp un-
bright, —

Thou did'st not still the harp, or quench the light;
But, patient of my lay, — its harshness borne, —
Did'st spare the minstrel's fault, — the critic
scorn! —

And therefore it is just, — and so shall be, —
That all I name mine own, my minstrelsy,
Convey this all I have to give . . . a prayer! —
May many gracious years their freshness share
With thee, — and singing Hope, uncheated, press
To watch thy golden fruit of Happiness!

Farewell! tho' words were on my lips, my breath
Had let them perish in a silent death,
And hid their grave from echo: but I thought
That howsoever they were rudely wrought,
Their "truth might be their dower": and thou
might'st hear

In kindness what was spoken in a fear! —
For that, the simple words, I, thus, let fall,
Are likest harpstrings swept in echoing Hall, —
Only their TREMBLING makes them musical! —

E. B. B.

BEFORE SLEEPING

An Invocation

Grateful Sleep, returning spring
And o'er my head expand thy wing!
Angels near my couch attend
And Guardian Seraphim defend!
Ye dreams so grateful to my soul
Who bid again the ocean roll,
Who bid again those waters rise
Renewing pleasure as she flies,
Oh now around my lonely bed
Your wings of various colors spread;
And thou, soft Cynthia, pensive Moon,
Now shining on thy silver throne,
Reminding wretched sinners here
Of virtue and some brighter sphere,
Now bend from yonder azure deep
And gild my pillow as I sleep;
And ye, oh Muses, heavenly powers,
Dear solace of my happy hours,
Even as I sleep my soul beguile
And cheer my slumbers with a smile.
Ev'n now, sweet Minstrels, let me hear
Those sounds which charmed ev'n Pluto's ear

“With all the soul of harmony”
When Orpheus sought Eurydice; —
And don’t forget my curls to keep
In order due when I’m asleep;
When morning comes then let me wake
And from my eyelids slumber shake;
This, great Apollo’s daughters, do —
And I will ever honour you!

CATARINA TO CAMOENS

An Early Draft

I

My cheek hath paled its rose away,
My lips can smile no more,
And wert thou near me, would'st thou say,
"I love thee" as before?
When dull the eyes once dreamed to be
"The sweetest eyes thou e'er didst see."

II

What time I heard that song of thine
Amid my courtly days —
Though others praised their starlike shine,
I joyed not at the praise.
I only joyed that they should be
"The sweetest eyes *thou* e'er didst see."

III

And well I know, wert thou beside
Thy Cat'rine's dying bed,
Though quenched all their light and pride,
Such words would still be said —
Her loving eyes still seeme to thee
The sweetest ones *thou* e'er didst see.

IV

When wilt thou come? When I am gone
 Where all unpassioned are —
 Where e'en thy voice of tender tone
 Will cause no pulse to stir —
 When shroud and stone will hide with me
 The sweetest eyes thou e'er didst see.

V

And wilt thou ever, ever keep
 That band which bound mine hair? *
 Clasp it, dear love, but do not weep
 Too long and wildly there;
 For still from Heav'n shall look on thee
 The sweetest eyes thou e'er didst see.

VI

But now they are not yet in Heav'n,
 And fill with sudden tears,
 Because thy thoughts may not be given
 To *them* in after years—
 Then other eyes may seem to thee
 The sweetest ones thou e'er didst see.

VII

Ah me! can death so soon begin
 This heart to change and chill,

* Which she gave to him at their parting.

That *I* should weep because I ween
 Thou mayst be happy still?—
Heaven bless *whatever* eyes may be
The sweetest eyes thou e'er shalt see!

Mr. Forman's deep interest in, and admiration for, Elizabeth Barrett Browning is not of recent origin, as will be seen by the following hitherto unpublished lines which he has very kindly allowed us to print as a fitting conclusion to this little book. They are addressed —

TO LAURA BUXTON FORMAN, WITH A REPRINT OF
THE 1st EDITION OF "AURORA LEIGH" EDITED
FOR THE "TEMPLE CLASSICS" AND RECEIVED
FROM THE PUBLISHER IN TIME FOR HER BIRTHDAY.

I

WHEN first we read "Aurora Leigh"
We sat on Richmond Green to do it.
I looked at you and you at me
When both should have been looking through it.

II

"November 8th of '66" —
We read it from the 5th edition:
The book lies there, the date to fix,
And still in excellent condition.

III

It was because superb I'd found it
I came to share with you my treasure;
And that quaint Scot McCulloch bound it
That you might look on it with pleasure.

IV

But 'twas in later calmer years
We grew to know Aurora better
For love will find in courtship's fears
A thousand things the mind to fetter.

V

No more we sit on Richmond Green
Even in the sunniest summer weather.
No more through gracious meads of Sheen
We loiter hand in hand together.

VI

But while we face the downward slope,
Aurora Leigh in youth eternal
Lifts her fair hand in sign of hope
To those whose lives are quick and vernal.

VII

Aurora Leigh and Marian Erle
Speak truth to all who care to know it,
And bare for unborn man and girl
The soul of our great woman-poet.

VIII

Aurora's is her mind, her art,
 Her scorn of all that's base and sordid.
 In Marian's peerless mother-heart
 The perfect woman stands recorded.

IX

They two shall testify of her
 While still our English speech is spoken,
 And gold and frankincense and myrrh
 The worship of the world betoken.

X

The high-tide mark of her clear fame
 We two shall not be here to witness;
 But in some nook I may not name,
 Fulfilling "the Eternal Fitness."

XI

We shall be wrapped in that vast night
 Where dawns no sorrow-day or mirth-day.—
 So now I've shaped the text aright;
 And you've the book upon your birthday.

H. B. F.

29 January, 1899.

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